

REMARKS

Claim 1 is amended. Claims 1 and 3-8 remain in the Application. Reconsideration of the pending claims is respectfully requested in view of the above amendment and the following remarks.

I. Claims Rejected Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,418,494 issued to Betti et al. (Betti). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, the relied upon references must teach or suggest every limitation of the claim such that the invention as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to one skilled in the art.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the obviousness rejection of claim 1 are requested.

II. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication that Claims 3-8 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants respectfully submit that the amendment to its base Claim 1 has obviated the need to rewrite these dependent claims. As Claim 1 is in condition for allowance, Claims 3-8 are allowable at least for the reasons mentioned in regard to Claim 1. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection of Claims 3-8 are requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that all claims now are now in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited at the earliest possible date. If there are any additional fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge those fees to our Deposit Account No. 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,

BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR & ZAFMAN LLP

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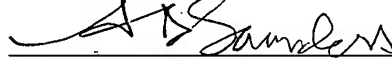


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 3/22/06
Amber D. Saunders Date